

Remarks

I hope that the clarifications added exclude any suggestions of anticipation by the previous art for my Claim 1:

- Since according to Claim 1 the bearing portion and the outer portion 'are directly and firmly connected by screwing', my invention is not anticipated by Thackara (USPN 2766473) where the corresponding parts are not directly connected. According to Thackara's patent, the cap 16 and the cap 25 are independently mounted on the axle 13.
- Since according to Claim 1 the bearing portion and the outer portion 'are directly and firmly connected by screwing', my invention is not anticipated by Newman (USPN 3745624) where the corresponding parts are not connected by screwing. According to the Newman's patent, they are 'a pair of independent frame units rotatable on a spindle of the paint roller'.
- According to Claim 1, the outer portion comprises 'a supporting surface to support the paint roller sleeve' and is 'removable to permit replacement of the roller sleeve'. Claim 1 cannot be anticipated by Dezen (USPN 4467509) where the supporting surface 66 belongs to the outer end member 40 that is *permanently* mounted 'on the shaft 28 similar to the member 36'.

The removable outer portion in Claim 1 combines three key structural elements that were *never* present *together* in the similar removable parts (outer end caps) in the previous art. It comprises 'an annular (inner) face against which an adjacent (inner) end surface of the roller sleeve core can be urged' (1), 'a supporting surface to support the paint roller sleeve' (2), and 'connection means' to be 'directly and firmly connected by screwing' to the bearing portion (3).

The annular face (1) is present in Thackara's, Newman's, and Dezen's designs too. However with respect to (2), my design differs from Dezen's design (though it is similar to Thackara's and Newman's designs). At the same time, with respect to (3) my design differs from Thackara's and Newman's designs (though it is similar to Dezen's design with the removable end cap that can be screwed to the outer end member).

Claims 2, 3, and 4 add to the design discussed in Claim 1 well known and not protected by any patent structural elements. Claim 6 is emphasizing existence of a simple implementation for the general design presented in Claim 1. Such an implementation could be easily 'disassembled for maintenance or replacement of worn parts, assembled again, and mounted on the shaft with the help of conventional tools'.

Claim 7 is discussing a corner-painting assembly. Similar assemblies are described in Al-samman's USPN 4402102, Napolitan's USPN 6499177, and other patents. They all differ in the way the corner-painting assembly is attached to the paint roller frame. *None of them* can be mounted on the cylinder surface of the annular face of the removable end cap. Al-samman, in particular, teaches that his corner-painting assembly works with 'a conventional paint applicator of the roller type'. It *cannot* be used with the design presented in Claim 1 due to 'fingers 3a or wire-like fingers'.